Academies for boys and for girls

Advertisements from various North Carolina newspapers, 1838–1840.

As you read...

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In the antebellum period, North Carolina families who wanted their children to receive an education beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic typically sent them to private academies. Although these academies were often in the same county where students lived, they were far enough from home in an age of horse travel that students typically boarded (stayed and ate with) with local families.

In these advertisements, placed in various newspapers between 1838 and 1840, you can see the kinds of subjects taught at private academies and the kinds of things parents thought were important to their children's education. In particular, you can see the differences between boys' and girls' education.

- First, identify which of the advertisements are for boys' schools and which are for girls'. (Not all of them say so clearly.) How can you tell?
- What differences were there between the subjects taught to boys and girls? Was the curriculum the same at all the academies, or were there differences?
- Why would boys and girls have been taught those subjects? What does the curriculum say about the sort of life they were expected to lead?
- How do the academies reassure parents that their children will be well educated and cared for? What was important about the school? the teacher? the location of the academy? Are there differences in the kinds of reassurances given to parents of boys and to parents of girls? Why might that be?
- How would a student's life have been different from the lives of students today?

Pittsboro' Female Academy [1838][1]

Under the care of Miss Elizabeth Anderson.

The first Term of this school will commence Feb. 12, and close on the 20th December next, with a vacation of two weeks at the close of the first session.

TERMS.

- For Orthography, Reading and Writing, per session of five months $6.00
- For English Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic, per session of five months $10.00

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- For any other branches, in addition to those named, such as Philosophy, History, Botany, Chemistry, &c. per session of five months $12.50
- Miss A. will give instruction in Needle Work without any additional charge; also lessons in Drawing and Painting at an extra charge of $8.00 per session. Tuition in advance, and no deduction for absence, except in case of sickness.

Miss A. has had several years experience as a Tutoress in the Greensborough Female Academy, and the Trustees are well assured of her competency to give satisfaction in all the branches of a sound English Education. Board can be had in the Town with respectable Families, at a moderate price.

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Pleasant Hill Academy [1838][2]

The Exercises of the Pleasant Hill Academy closed on the 18th inst. to be resumed on the 8th of January next.

From the success attendant upon the Exercises of the past Session, conducted by BAXTER CLEGG, A. B., we cheerfully recommend the School to the patronage of our fellow citizens, and urge its claims especially on such as desire for their sons and wards a healthy location, at a distance from all scenes of dissipation. The Academy is located six miles south of Pittsboro. The high moral character of the neighborhood and the healthiness of the situation, commend it to the favorable regard of those preparing their sons for College, or training them for honor or usefulness. The following are the terms of the School per Session of five months, in advance:

For English Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic	$10 00
Algebra, Geometry, Surveying, &c.	12 50
Latin and Greek	15 00

Board, including bedding, washing and firewood, can be obtained in private families, convenient to the Academy, at $6 per month, in advance. Further information respecting the School can be obtained by addressing the Subscriber, or the Principal, B. Clegg, Pittsboro'.

WM. M. BURNS, Ch. Com.
Chatham county, December 13, 1838.

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Pittsboro' Academy [1839][3]

The Exercises of this Institution will commence on the 8th July next, under the superintendence of the former Instructor, Mr. J. M. Lovejoy.

TERMS.

- Classics, $18 Per Session.
- English, 15 Per Session.
- The following are the branches taught in this Institution, viz. Latin, Greek, French, Algebra, Arithmetic, Geometry, History, English Grammar, Ancient and Modern Geography, Navigation and Surveying, Reading, Writing and Spelling.
- In addition to the preparatory course in the Classics, Mr. Lovejoy will give unremitted attention to young gentlemen, in Algebra, Geometry, History, Ancient and Modern Geography, and will permit no Scholar to pass out of his hands without a competent knowledge of the above branches.

The Trustees of this Institution, under a deep sense of the great evil flowing from imperfect Teaching in some of our Academies, hesitate not in recommending this School to the public, having had ample testimony, during a twelve months residence among us, of the ability, propriety and general intelligence of Mr. Lovejoy in all matters connected with Teaching.

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Calm Retreat Female Academy [1840][4]

This institution has been in successful operation for 2 Sessions, under the management of Miss SPENCER, a young lady of superior qualifications, from the North, and she has given universal satisfaction to all, as well pupils as parents and guardians, who have favored her with their patronage. — The Academy is situated in Caswell County, N.C. five miles south of Brown's Store, in a healthy and a very retired situation, and affords every facility for a thorough and accomplished female education, and is entirely worthy of the attention of those those who may wish their daughters educated in a very superior style.

The following are the terms:

The first class embraces Authography, penmanship and Reading, $5 per session of five months.

2nd Class — English Grammar, Geography, with the use of the Maps, and Arithmetic, $7 50.

3d Class — Embracing the higher branches of English Literature, $8 50.

For Drawing, Painting, and the various kinds of Ornamental Needle-work, $8 additional.

The next session will commence on the 3d of February.

The subscriber is prepared to accommodate any number of young ladies with good board, at $6 per month. Good board can be had in the neighborhood at from 4 to $6 per month.

Letters addressed to the subscriber, Brown's Store, Caswell county, N. C. upon the subject of the Academy, will meet with prompt attention.

ANTHONY WILLIAMSON.

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Asheboro Female Academy [1840][5]

The exercises of this institution will commence on the 8th of January 1840, under the direction of MISS ELIZA REA.

The prices of Tuition for a Session of five months will be for Spelling and Reading $6; for the first part of Arithmetic and History, either or both including the foregoing, $7; For Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic $8; for Philosophy, History, &c., $10; Music on the Piano, $20; for Wax Flower Work $7; Wax Fruit $6; the learner to be entitled to six pieces of each.

Boarding including Washing, Candles, Fuel &c., can be had at the Rev. Jesse Lawrence's Where Miss Rea boards, or in most of the other families of the place, at 6; per month.

The Trustees, during the first Session, could only speak of the qualifications of Miss Rea from recommendations which she brought with her from the North; They can now add, from their own observation of the management of the School heretofore, that she will use every exertion for the advancement of her pupils.

The Trustees hope that the remarkable healthiness of the place, the established reputation of the lady who has charge of the Institution, and the low price of board, constitute sufficient inducements for parents and guardians to send to our school.

J. M. A. DRAKE, Sec'y.
By order of the Trustees,
January, 1840.

N. B. The prospects of this Institution are such, that an assistant Teacher will shortly be bro't on from the North.

On the web

North Carolina Schools and Academies, 1790-1840

http://books.google.com/books?id=BtKEAAAAIAAJ

This book by Charles Lee Coon, available through Google Books, contains hundreds of announcements and other primary sources on North Carolina's early schools.

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Notes

1. Advertisement in the Raleigh *Register*, January 15, 1838. Coon, Charles L, *The Beginnings of Public Education in North Carolina; A Documentary History, 1790–1840* (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1908), 42. Available online (see http://www.learnnc.orghttp://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/coon/coon.html) (retrieved on December 8, 2008).

2. Advertisement in the Raleigh *Register*, December 24, 1838. Ibid., 49.

3. Advertisement in the Raleigh *Register*, July 20, 1839. Ibid., 43.

4. Advertisement in the *North Carolina Standard*, February 5, 1840, p. 4.

5. Advertisement in the Asheboro *Southern Citizen*, January 17, 1840. Coon, *The Beginnings of Public Education in North Carolina; A Documentary History, 1790–1840*.